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Serial No. 09/414,104
Amendment dated July 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action of April 6, 2006

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Docket No. 1232-4578

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-45 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 23, 38 and 40 are independent. By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 23, 38 and 40 are amended. Dependent claims 2, 3, 13, 15, 16, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 39 and 45 are also amended. No new matter has been added.

Objections

Claims 2, 3, 13, 15, 16, 25, 29, 30 have been objected to by informalities.

As shown above, these objected to claims have been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully request that these objections be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

In paragraph four (4) of the Office Action, claim 45 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Office Action indicates that "said control means ... performing initialization of said mechanical drive means" contradicts with claim 40 which recites the mechanical drive means operates independently of the control means.

As shown above, claim 45 has been amended addressing the conflict as indicated above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 45 under §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

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Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In paragraph five (5) of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 5-24 and 27-43 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,441,854 to Fellegara et al. ("Fellegara") in view of JP 10-260440 to Kusuda Hiroyuki ("Hiroyuki").

Fellegara discloses an electronic camera system that incorporates a working memory for storing a working image of a last captured image. It is indicated in Fellegara that the working memory allows an operator to review the last captured image without causing a large energy drain (e.g., col. 1, lines 44-47).

Referring to Fig. 6 of Fellegara, the Office Action indicates that each of the microcontroller 120 at the digital subsystem unit 72 and the microcontroller 140 at the main camera controller 68 respectively reads on the first and second system controllers of the claims of the present invention.

Independent claims 1, 23, 38 and 40 have been amended for further clarification. In particular, amended claim 1 makes it clear that the first system controller controls the image sensing operation and the second system controller controls the mechanical operation of the lens barrel. Furthermore, amended claim 1 makes it clear that the power is supplied from exclusive power source of the second system controller that controls the lens barrel. Other independent claims 23, 28 and 40 are amended in a similar way to claim 1 as discussed herein. Supports for the amendment may be found, for example, in Fig. 1, page 16, lines 7-10 and page 18, line 24 to page 19, line 1, of the original specification.

One of the aspects of the present invention is to reduce a so-called "preparation time" of a digital camera to take a picture upon found an object. Specifically, the present invention reduces

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the preparation time by performing the extending operation of the lens barrel during the initialization period of an operating system residing in the main controller.

First of all, it appears that there is no teaching in Fellegara that is directed to reduce the preparation time by performing the extending operation of the lens barrel, as required by the pending claims of this application.

Secondly, Fellegara fails to show suggest the specific teaching of the power supply of the present invention, i.e., the amended claims specifically require that the power is supplied from a controller that controls the mechanical operation of the lens barrel to the main controller that controls the image sensing operation. It appears in Fig. 6 of Fellegara that the power supply 76 is connected to both the main camera controller 68 and digital subsystem 72.

Additionally, a portion of Fellegara describes that:

The microcontroller 140 holds the digital subsystem microcontroller 120 in reset until its power supply from the power supply unit 76 is stable. An asynchronous serial interface allows the main camera controller 68 to receive and send commands to and from the digital subsystem unit 72. Various operator controls discussed above that constitute part of the camera operator interface 74 are also sensed by the microcontroller's 140 input lines. (col. 9, lines 35-40)

The above-cited portion of Fellegara implies that the two microcontrollers 120, 140 are not independently operated as required by the present invention.

Hiroyuki is merely cited as disclosing extending a lens barrel and fails to show or suggest the invention as discussed above, i.e., Hiroyuki fails to disclose that the second system controller starts and continues to extend the lens barrel while the first system controller launches the operating system in response to a start of the power source initiated by the second system controller.

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Accordingly, each of claims 1, 23, 38 and 40 as amended is believed neither anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of the cited references (i.e., Fellegara and Hiroyuki), either taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons discussed above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 23, 38 and 40 under §103 (a) is respectfully requested.

Applicants have not individually addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because the independent claims from which they respectively depend are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Applicants, however, reserve the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

Applicants respectfully assert that the application as amended is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

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No petitions or additional fees are believed due for this amendment and/or any accompanying submissions. However, to the extent that any additional fees and/or petition is required, including a petition for extension of time, Applicants hereby petition the Commissioner to grant such petition, and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including any fees which may be required for such petition, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500 (Order No. 1232-4578). A DUPLICATE COPY OF THIS SHEET IS ENCLOSED.

An early and favorable examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: July 5, 2006

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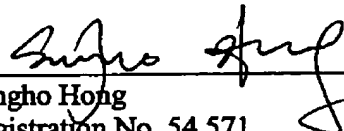
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